AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. Canceled.

2. Canceled

3. (Currently Amended) ~~The method for manufacturing a rod with an optical thin film according to claim 2, further comprising:~~

A method for manufacturing a rod with an optical thin film wherein a plurality of rods are integrally fixed with a resin so as to have axes running in parallel to one another, wherein the rods each have a circular cross section and are aligned in parallel to and in contact with one another, and the resin is a thermoplastic resin, the method comprising sequentially performing:

forming a rod block by allowing the resin to enter gaps between adjacent rods to thereby fix the rods to one another;

cutting the rods into a predetermined length;

polishing the cut endfaces of the rods;

forming an optical thing film on the polished endfaces of the rods, wherein the resin has a melting point higher than the temperature to which the rods are exposed during said forming; and

separating the rods from one another by dissolving or swelling the thermoplastic resin with a solvent to dismantle the rod block after completion of said forming an optical thin film.

4. (Original) The method for manufacturing a rod with an optical thin film according to claim 3, wherein, in said separating the rods from one another, auxiliary energy is used.

5. (Currently Amended) The method for manufacturing a rod with an optical thin film according to claim [[1]] 3, wherein the rods are rod lens performs each having a predetermined refractive index distribution.

6. Canceled.

7. Canceled.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~The method for manufacturing a rod with an optical thin film according to claim 6,~~

A method for manufacturing a rod with an optical thin film, the method comprising:

forming a rod block by arranging a plurality of rods each having a circular cross section in parallel to one another along the axis of each rod, and by allowing a resin to enter gaps between the rods to fix the rods to one another, wherein the rods are rod lens preforms each having a predetermined refractive index distribution, wherein in said forming a rod block, the rods are arranged along a sheet made of the resin and the resin is melted in this state and then hardened to fix the rods to one another with the resin;

cutting the rod block into a predetermined length;

polishing the endfaces of each rod positioned on the cut endface of the rod block;

forming an optical thin film on the polished endfaces of each rod, wherein the resin has a

melting point higher than the temperature during said forming of the optical film; and

separating the rods from one another by removing the resin from the rod block.

9. (Currently Amended) The method for manufacturing a rod with an optical thin film according to claim [[6]] 8, wherein in said separating the rods from one another, a solvent for dissolving the resin and auxiliary energy for accelerating the dissolution of the resin is used.

Claims 10 – 14. Canceled.